

# Flourney Keeps Nixon at Distance

By George Murphy

Houston I. Flourney, Republican nominee for governor of California, said here yesterday he does not think "it's important" to have the support of President Nixon in his campaign.

Flourney came very close to saying he doesn't want the beleaguered President's support, but stopped just short of saying so.

Flourney, now state controller, bobbed and weaved when pressed by newsmen at a St. Francis Hotel press conference as to whether he would welcome Mr. Nixon's efforts in his behalf.

"I am not asking Republicans from outside California to campaign for me," Flourney said.

When reporters noted that Mr. Nixon is legally a California resident, Flourney re-

sponded: "A California voter, yes. And I hope I get his vote."

Flourney repeatedly insisted that the November contest between himself and Democratic nominee Edmund G. Brown Jr. will be "a campaign on the issues affecting California."

"I don't think the absence or presence of the President will make any difference in the campaign," he said.

Flourney is not considered by many members of his party to be a conservative. He has to walk the fine line during the campaign between supporters of Mr. Nixon and Democrats and independents, who are urging the President's removal from office and whose vote Flourney must have to defeat Brown.

He insisted yesterday that Watergate should not be an

issue in the gubernatorial race, but it is clear that Brown will continue to bring it up.

Mr. Nixon arrives in San Clemente today but Flourney said he "has no plans" to meet with the President.

Flourney said he will be in Washington today for the funeral of former Chief Justice of the United States Earl Warren.

The candidate said, under stiff questioning, that he was "neither associating nor disassociating myself from the President."

When asked whether he would accept an offer by Mr. Nixon to campaign for him, Flourney responded:

"I don't seek it, and I don't think it's important."

He added that questions concerning Mr. Nixon's campaigning for him are

"kind of academic. I don't anticipate any offers."

Asked whether he would ask Vice President Gerald Ford to campaign for him, should Ford become President before November, Flourney said "I don't think it would have any big effect on the campaign."

Flourney was joined at his press conference by San Franciscan William Armanino, who, before the June primary, headed "Californians for Alioto," supporting Mayor Joseph Alioto's bid for the Democratic gubernatorial nomination.

Armanino said he believes that "most of the people in the (Alioto) campaign will join me in supporting (Flourney)."

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